

<u>No:</u>	BH2026/01449	<u>Ward:</u>	Round Hill Ward
<u>App Type:</u>	Full Planning		
<u>Address:</u>	16 Lewes Road Brighton BN2 3HP		
<u>Proposal:</u>	Part conversion of social club (F2) to place of worship (F1(f)) with 5no priest rooms providing occasional sleeping accommodation.		
<u>Officer:</u>	Charlie Partridge,	<u>Valid Date:</u>	15.06.2026
<u>Con Area:</u>	N/A	<u>Expiry Date:</u>	10.08.2026
<u>Listed Building Grade:</u>	<u>EOT:</u>		
Agent:	ADC Ltd Citibase Brighton 95 Ditchling Road Brighton BN1 4ST		
Applicant:	Mr H Choudhury 16 Lewes Road Brighton BN2 3HP		

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1. That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out below and resolves to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the following Conditions and Informatives:

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings listed below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received
Report/Statement	Mosque Management Plan		05-Aug-26
Location and block plan	ADC 1718/LP		15-Jun-26
Proposed Drawing	ADC 1718/03		15-Jun-26
Proposed Drawing	ADC 1718/04		15-Jun-26

2. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority retains the right to review unimplemented permissions.

3. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of secure cycle parking facilities for the occupants of, and visitors to, the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory facilities for the parking of cycles are provided and to encourage travel by means other than private motor vehicles and to comply with policy DM33 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a scheme for the storage of refuse and recycling has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be carried out and provided in full in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the development and the refuse and recycling storage facilities shall thereafter be always retained for use.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage of refuse and to comply with Policies DM18 and DM21 of Brighton & Hove City Plan Part 2, policy CP8 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One and Policy WMP3e of the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan.

5. The premises shall only be used for worship, meetings and associated activities between 08:00 and 22:00 Monday to Saturday and between 08:00 and 21:00 on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Noise associated with the use of the premises shall be controlled such that the Rating Level measured or calculated at 1 metre from the façade of the nearest existing noise-sensitive premises shall not exceed the existing LA90 background noise level. The Rating Level and existing background noise levels shall be determined in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 (or any subsequent revision).

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residential occupiers by ensuring that the use of the premises does not result in unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance, particularly during unsociable hours, in accordance with Policies DM20 and DM40 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two.

6. The priest rooms shall be used solely for ancillary occasional sleeping accommodation associated with the place of worship and shall not be occupied as independent residential units, HMOs, hostels or short-term holiday lets.

Reason: To ensure that the accommodation remains ancillary to the place of worship and to prevent the creation of an independent residential use that has not been assessed as part of this permission, in accordance with Policies CP12 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One and DM1 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two.

7. Prior to the commencement of the use, a Noise Impact Assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall identify the likely noise impacts arising from the proposed use on nearby noise-sensitive premises and shall include any necessary noise mitigation measures. Any mitigation measures identified shall be implemented in full prior to the first use of the premises and shall thereafter be retained and maintained as approved.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers from noise and disturbance arising from the use and to ensure an acceptable living environment for future users of the premises, in accordance with Policies DM20 and DM40 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two.

8. The development shall operate at all times in full accordance with the approved Mosque Management Plan. All measures, procedures and controls set out within the approved Mosque Management Plan shall be implemented prior to first use of the premises and shall thereafter be retained and adhered to for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory management of the premises and to safeguard the amenities of neighbouring occupiers from noise, disturbance and other impacts arising from the use, in accordance with Policies DM20 and DM40 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two.

9. No external loudspeakers, tannoy systems, public address systems or other means of external sound amplification shall be installed or used at the site at any time.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers from noise and disturbance arising from the use of the premises, in accordance with Policies DM20 and DM40 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two.

Informatives:

1. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy SS1 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One the approach to making a decision on this planning application has been to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Local Planning Authority seeks to approve planning applications which are for sustainable development where possible.
2. To align with Policy DM33 of the City Plan cycle parking must be secure, convenient, well lit, well signed and wherever practical, sheltered. The Local Highway Authority's preference is for Sheffield type stands to ensure the main frame of the bicycle can be securely stored. All must be spaced in line with the guidance contained within the Manual for Streets section 8.2.22.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Based on the information available, this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply. These can be found in the Environment Act 2021.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that, unless an exception or a transitional arrangement applies, the planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition ("the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

2. SITE LOCATION

- 2.1. The application site relates to a large three storey building on the northwest side of Lewes Road. The application relates to the ground and first floors of the rear

section of the building currently in use as a Social Club. Whilst the building is accessed via Lewes Road, the social club itself is set back from the main Lewes Road frontage and backs on to Park Crescent Place at the rear. An additional storey was added to the roof of the front section of the building facing Lewes Road to create 2x one-bedroom flats under application BH2020/01649. These residential flats are not directly above the social club, which is accessed via an entrance corridor.

- 2.2. The existing use of the site is as a Social Club F2 (b) known as Brighton and Hove Sports and Social Club. The front part of the site including the entrance sits within the Lewes Road District Centre, but the main part of the building used as a social club is located just outside the designated District Centre. The site is not within a conservation area.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1. **BH2019/01556: 15-16 Lewes Road** Change of use from Labour Members Club (D2) to retail/financial or professional services (A1/A2) at part ground floor and basement levels. The proposal also incorporates alterations to the front elevation. Approved 27.09.2019
- 3.2. **BH2018/01469: 15-16 Lewes Road** Change of use from Labour Members Club (D2) to Restaurant/Café (A3) at part ground floor and basement levels and alterations to shop front. Approved 28.03.2019

4. APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

- 4.1. Planning permission is sought for the part conversion of a social club (F2) to a place of worship (F1(f)) with five rooms providing occasional ancillary sleeping accommodation for priests. The original description was amended from 'bedrooms' to 'priest rooms'. The proposal would result in the conversion of approximately 293sqm (32.5%) of the existing gross internal floorspace of the F2 social club to F1(f) floorspace and approximately 608sqm (67.5%) of the F2 floorspace would be retained. No external extensions and alterations to the building are proposed.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1. Ten (10) letters have been received **objecting to** the proposed development for the following reasons:
- Additional Traffic
 - Noise
 - Highway safety
 - Regular crowd gathering resulting in congestion/blocking of the narrow footway
 - Unsuitable location for place of worship
 - Harm to residential amenity

- Building entrance on a red route, adding parking pressure to surrounding residential streets
 - Lack of information and noise assessment for event space
 - Loss of inclusive community facilities
 - Loss of existing F2 community floorspace
 - Contrary to Policy DM9 (Community Facilities) of the City Plan Part 2
 - Detrimental effect on property value
 - Adjacent neighbours not consulted
 - Overdevelopment
 - Groups of males gathering
 - Concerns regarding LGBTQ+ inclusion and gender equality
- 5.2. Fourteen (14) letters have been received **supporting** the proposed development for the following reasons:
- Utilising underused building
 - Serves the local community
 - Benefits the Muslim community
 - Positive economic benefits
 - Good design
 - Educational benefits
 - Benefit to residential amenity
 - Improve social cohesion/connections
 - Opportunities for youth engagement
 - Charity and volunteering opportunities
- 5.3. Councillor Raphael Hill has made a representation **in support** of the application, raising the following points:
- Benefit to residential amenity
 - Lack of space for Muslim worshipers in the city
 - Will allow greater connections between communities
 - Additional parking restrictions on nearby streets may be worth consideration
- 5.4. One (1) letter was received **neither objecting to nor supporting** the proposed development, but raised the following points:
- Site already being used for regular prayer
 - Crowds are unsustainable and dangerous
 - Red route so there is no suitable pick up or drop off point
 - Encourages dangerous, illegal and crowded parking

6. CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1. **Planning Policy:** 29.06.2026 Comments not required
- 6.2. **Environmental Health:** 13.07.2026 Acceptable subject to conditions relating to the following:
- Noise Management Plan
 - Hours of use

- Amplified sound
- Noise insulation
- Plant noise

- 6.3. **Sustainable Transport: 07.08.2026** Acceptable subject to conditions relating to cycle storage and refuse and recycling. They also state the following:
- 6.4. We have assessed this application on the basis that the sleeping quarters would be only for occasional temporary use, and that none of the occupants would become eligible for residents' parking permits in the future.
- 6.5. Plans indicate minimal internal alterations, and no changes to pedestrian access. The upstairs rooms would be accessed via an internal staircase or lift, which is acceptable.
- 6.6. The proposed development is unlikely to result in a significant increase in trips, compared to the consented social club use.
- 6.7. Parking Standards SPD14 allows a maximum of 9 car parking spaces for this development. None are proposed, which is acceptable given the site's accessibility by public transport and cycle. Many major bus routes operate along Lewes Road, and there are bus stops adjacent to and opposite the site. The city centre is 10 minutes' cycle from the site, partially along demarked or segregated cycle lanes.
- 6.8. SPD14 also states a minimum of 3 on-site disabled parking spaces for this development, and none are proposed. However, due to the constraints of the site, there is no reasonable means by which this provision could be made. SPD14 also requires a minimum of 3 cycle parking spaces for this development. There appears to be space at the rear of the site to make this provision, and we therefore find the proposal acceptable with the inclusion of a Cycle Parking Scheme condition.
- 6.9. The rear of the site benefits from an on-street loading bay which would serve for deliveries and servicing of the site.
- 6.10. It is unclear from the submitted documents how refuse and recycling would be stored and collected. We therefore request the inclusion of a Refuse and Recycling Scheme condition with any consent.

7. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1. In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan, and all other material planning considerations identified in the "Considerations and Assessment" section of the report.
- 7.2. The development plan is:
- Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One (adopted March 2016);

- Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two (adopted October 2022);
- East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (adopted February 2013; revised October 2024);
- East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (adopted February 2017);
- Shoreham Harbour JAAP (adopted October 2019).

8. RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One:

SS1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CP9	Sustainable transport

Brighton & Hove City Plan Part Two:

DM9	Community Facilities
DM12	Regional, Town, District and Local Shopping Centres
DM20	Protection of Amenity
DM33	Safe, sustainable and active travel

9. CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

- 9.1. The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to the principle of the proposed conversion and whether this would have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity or on the safety of the public highway.

Principle of the Development

- 9.2. The application seeks the part conversion of the existing social club (Use Class F2) to a place of worship (Use Class F1(f)) with associated ancillary accommodation.
- 9.3. Policy DM9 of the City Plan Part Two seeks to support new community facilities in accessible locations and identifies places of worship as a form of designated community facility. The site occupies a sustainable urban location on Lewes Road, well served by public transport and readily accessible by walking and cycling. The proposed use would therefore continue the community function of the building.
- 9.4. A number of representations have raised concerns regarding the loss of the former social club use and a conflict with Policy DM9. However, F1(f) use (place of worship) is expressly identified within the supporting text of Policy DM9 as a designated community facility so it is considered that no community floorspace would be lost as a result of the proposal. In addition, the proposal would only part-convert the use of the building and the existing F2(b) use would be partially retained. The proposal would result in the conversion of approximately 293sqm (32.5%) of the existing gross internal floorspace of the social club to a mosque so approximately 608sqm (67.5%) of the social club floorspace would be retained. The ground floor hall, bar and stage would be converted into a prayer

room, which would form the majority of the proposed mosque area. On the first floor, the three offices would be converted into five priest rooms, which would form the rest of the mosque area proposed. The events space area (currently comprising a bar, dance floor and lounge) on the first floor would be retained for wider community use. The bar itself would be removed as no alcohol would be served on the premises, but the space would still form part of the community area. The kitchens, library, plant room, corridors, stairs and toilets would be used by both the proposed mosque and retained community space.

- 9.5. It is acknowledged that the proposal would alter the nature of the activities undertaken within parts of the building. Nevertheless, the proposal would continue to provide community facilities and significant weight is therefore afforded to the continued community-based use of the premises.
- 9.6. On balance, it is considered that the proposal represents a change between community facility uses rather than the loss of a community facility and is therefore not contrary to the overall objectives of Policy DM9.
- 9.7. The principle of the proposed development is therefore considered acceptable, subject to detailed consideration of its impacts on neighbouring amenity, transport, noise, the operation of the proposed ancillary accommodation, and all other material planning considerations.

Design and Appearance

- 9.8. No external extensions and alterations to the building are proposed.

Impact on Amenity

- 9.9. Policy DM20 of the City Plan Part Two states that planning permission for development including change of use will be granted where it would not cause unacceptable loss of amenity to the proposed, existing and / or adjacent users, residents, occupiers or where it is not liable to be detrimental to human health.
- 9.10. No external extensions and alterations to the building are proposed so no impacts in terms of daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy on the adjacent properties have been identified.
- 9.11. A Mosque Management Plan was produced in response to the Environmental Health consultation. The submitted management plan provides details on management of arrivals and departures, stewarding of larger events, procedures for complaints, contact details for a responsible manager, measures to prevent congregation outside the building and confirmation that no amplified music, amplified speech or public address system shall be audible at the nearest noise sensitive residential property.
- 9.12. The management plan is considered to be reasonable and comprehensive and is considered to sufficiently mitigate many of the potential impacts of the proposal.

- 9.13. In terms of noise, conditions would be added to any planning consent to address concerns relating to noise impacts on nearby residential properties. The conditions will require the following:
- A Noise Impact Assessment
 - The bedrooms be used solely for ancillary occasional sleeping accommodation associated with the place of worship
 - The hours of use be restricted
 - Compliance with the Mosque Management Plan
- 9.14. Subject to acceptable details being provided to satisfy the conditions prior to the first commencement of the use, it is considered that the impacts of the proposal can be successfully managed and it is not considered that the proposed development would cause an unacceptable level of harm to the amenity of neighbours and would comply with policy DM20 of the Brighton and Hove City Plan Part 2.

Sustainable Transport

- 9.15. The application was reviewed by the Local Highway Authority (LHA). It was considered that the proposal is unlikely to result in a significant increase in trips, compared to the consented social club use. No parking spaces are proposed, but this was considered acceptable to the LHA given the site's accessibility by public transport and cycle. No disabled parking is proposed, however given the constraints of the site, there are no reasonable locations for this to be provided. The LHA have requested a cycle parking condition to secure details for secure cycle parking provision at the rear of the site. The rear of the site also includes a loading bay for deliveries and servicing. The LHA have also requested a condition to secure details of proposed refuse and recycling. Subject to these conditions, the LHA do not object to the proposal.
- 9.16. Representations objecting to the proposal mentioned the additional traffic, highway safety, congestion of the footway, the site being situated on a red route and increased parking pressure on nearby residential streets. None of these potential impacts were identified by the LHA and are not considered to be significantly impactful issues given the location and capacity of the existing site. It is not considered that there are sufficient negative highways impact to warrant a refusal of the application.

Other Matters Including Those Raised in Representations

- 9.17. A number of representations were received objecting to the proposal for a variety of reasons, including the suitability of the location for a place of worship and the impact on property value. The proposal would convert one designated community facility to another, so in terms of planning policy, the principle of the proposal is acceptable. In addition, the impact on property value is not a material planning consideration.
- 9.18. Five priest rooms are proposed which would be used for occasional sleeping by priests. A condition is attached limiting how often these rooms can be used for sleeping and requiring their use to be solely ancillary to the place of worship to ensure they are not occupied as independent residential units, HMOs, hostels or short-term holiday lets.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 9.19. This scheme was considered exempt from the need to secure mandatory biodiversity net gain under Schedule 7A of the TCPA because it does not impact a priority habitat or habitat of more than 25sqm or 5m of linear habitat.

Conclusion

- 9.20. The proposal would not result in any net loss of community facilities and whilst the operation would utilise the existing building differently from the existing, it is not considered that, subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal would result in harmful impacts to neighbouring buildings or the character of the area sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

10. EQUALITIES

- 10.1. Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 provides:
- 1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 10.2. Officers considered the information provided by the applicant, together with the responses from consultees (and any representations made by third parties) and determined that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable material impact on individuals or identifiable groups with protected characteristics.